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us to suppose, that it is not the result of careful thought, but a hasty production written to supply a temporary demand.

To do Mr. Skinner justice, however, he does not despair of the Republic, and his influence, so far as it goes, is on the right side. Some parts of his book, as, for example, the chapter on Force Legislation, are valuable, but it cannot be said that he has contributed much toward what he is pleased to term the solution of our political issues.

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3. — *The Romance of the Harem.* By MRS. ANNA H. LEONOWENS, Author of "The English Governess at the Siamese Court." Illustrated. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co. 1873.

OUR readers will recall Mrs. Leonowens's very entertaining book, "The English Governess at the Siamese Court," in which she gave the public the account of her residence in that remote and generally unknown part of the world, and they will gladly welcome another volume which throws light upon the condition of this singular people before it follows other countries in the adoption of the black coat, high hat, and common law of England. The author's experience was most exceptional, living as she did in the most secluded part of an Eastern despot's home, and possessing over him and the unhappy women of his harem a very great influence, which she seems to have exercised to very good purpose. The condition in which the women lived, their dependence upon the favor of a jaded voluptuary, the suddenness and severity of the laws, all combine to produce the elements of every sort of tragedy; and we find in this volume nothing but the grimmest tales, which throw the inventions of our civilized romancers far into the shade. Most obvious, of course, is the pitiableness of it all, of the misery which the degradation of women surely entails; but there is found a certain relief from this in the many instances Mrs. Leonowens gives us of the simplicity, fidelity, and earnestness which held their own alongside of great corruption. We suppose that to their incomplete civilization is due so much of the singleness and the lack of complexity of their characters; they are, so to speak, more nearly heroic, by which we mean to indicate their difference from the many-sidedness of over or highly civilized people, whose minds are shaped by so many various influences. It is this quality which gives the stories the author has collected their great solemnity; all the incidents have a completeness; they concern the whole lives of the actors in a way that is not so often seen in our lives, with their manifold, varying, interwoven conditions. What, for instance, could be imagined more truly tragic than the first story,

that of Tuptim, the poor girl who, after the fashion of the country, had been brought among other offerings, such as silk, spices, silver and gold, curiosities and valuables of every kind, for the king's acceptance? She was a beautiful girl, but even when she had attracted the attention of the king, she was disobedient and discontented. From Mrs. Leonowens she learned enough to be able to write in English characters the name, "Khoon P'hra Bâlât": this she said was the name of the favorite disciple of Chow Khoon Sah, a high-priest, and that he sometimes preached to them at the palace. A few days later Mrs. Leonowens learns that Tuptim is in prison, and that she is to be tried for escaping from the palace and flying, in male attire, to the young priest whose name she had learned to write. Not only was that in their eyes a terrible crime, but that of which the priest was considered guilty, the breaking of his vows, was thought most monstrous. At the trial Tuptim said: "I know not why, but, when I found myself outside of the palace walls, I went straight to the temple of Rajah Bah ditt Lang, and sat down at the gate. Towards evening, the good priest, Chow Khoon Sah, came out, and, on seeing me, asked why I sat there. I did not know what else to say, and so I begged him to let me be his disciple, and live in his monastery. 'Whose disciple art thou, my child?' he asked. At which I began to cry, for I did not wish to deceive the holy man. Seeing my distress, he turned to P'hra Bâlât, who was following him with other priests, and bade him take me under his charge, and instruct me faithfully in all the doctrines of Buddha. Then P'hra Bâlât took me to his cell, but he did not recognize, in the young priest I seemed to be, the Tuptim he had known in his boyhood, and who had once been his betrothed wife."

"At this part of Tuptim's recital" (Mrs. Leonowens continues) "the women held up their arms in profound astonishment, and the men judges grinned maliciously, displaying their hateful gums, red with the juice of the betel-nut. . . .

"P'hra Bâlât, whom you have condemned to torture and to death, has not sinned. He is innocent. The sin is mine, and mine only. I knew that I was a woman, but he did not. If I had known all that he has taught me since I became his disciple, I could not have committed the great sin of which I am accused. I would have tried, indeed and truly I would have tried, to endure my life in the palace, and would not have run away. O lady dear! believe that I am speaking the truth. I grew quiet and happy because I was near him, and he taught me every day, and I can say the whole of the Nava d'harma (Divine Law) by heart. You can ask his other disciples, who were with me, and they will tell you that I was also modest and humble, and we all lay at his

feet by night. Indeed, dear lady, I did not so much want to be his wife after he became a p'hra (priest), but only to be near him." Then, after speaking of the way in which she had been arrested, she repeated the assurances of her innocence, but in vain. She is about to be beaten, but, at Mrs. Leonowens's instance, appeal is made to the king's clemency. He is at first gracious, but on that very afternoon she sees the scaffolding put up opposite her windows, on which Bâlât and Tup-tim are to be put to torture. Bravely enduring all its horrors, she simply said: "I have not sinned, nor has the priest, my Lord Bâlât, sinned. The sacred Buddh in heaven knows all." The next day they were burned at the stake. A month later, however, the king repented of his severity, and had two monuments erected on the place where these two people suffered, each bearing the inscription, "Suns may set and rise again, but the pure and brave Bâlât and Tuptim will never more return to this earth."

Not all the stories are as terrible as this, although all are solemn. In the story called "The Favorite of the Harem," a poet has a subject ready made to his hand. It will be remembered by those who read it in the "Atlantic Monthly" as an account of the favorite who at the very time she first attracted the king's notice, at a play in which she was acting, fell in love with a young nobleman in the king's suite. Later she corresponded with him, one of her women, named Boon, being the letter-carrier. Finally, however, one of the letters, evidently written to a lover, was detected, and both the women were thrown into prison. Then Choy (the *quondam* favorite) learns from Boon that this lover of hers was her woman's husband, from love for whom she had sacrificed herself and given him all the aid she could in his intrigue with Choy. The next day they are both put to torture to discover the name of the lover. Boon is firm to the end; but Choy, unable to endure its terrors, reveals the name of Boon's husband. He and his wife were sentenced to death, while Choy lived in unceasing remorse.

As a relief to these sad scenes, we have some anecdotes from the school-room. There is one as follows: Some ice having been brought to the king from Singapore, Mrs. Leonowens took advantage of the opportunity to tell her scholars, the women of the harem, about snow; they all were angrily incredulous, and one, Hidden-Perfume, said, "Please do not say that again. I believe you, like my own heart, in everything you have taught me, but this sounds like the story of a little child who wishes to say something more wonderful than anything that was ever said before." This was the same woman who called herself Harriet Beecher Stowe; and of her Mrs. Leonowens gives us a touching account.

We hope that our readers will be able to judge from our extracts of the interest and the rarity of such a book as this "Romance of the Harem." Those who take it up will find it a most impressive volume, one that is by no means merely entertaining. It lifts the veil from what was unknown ground; all who care for more than the commonplaces of many travellers' gossip will be glad to read it.

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4. — *Literature and Dogma. An Essay towards a better Apprehension of the Bible.* By MATTHEW ARNOLD, D. C. L., formerly Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford and Fellow of Oriel College. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co. 1873.

THE writings of other than theologians about the Bible have seldom been anything else than either loud-mouthed abuse, which has generally borne its condemnation on its face, or, in later times, the contemptuous utterance of scientific men, who may have been civiler in form, though at heart they have been equally hostile to the book, so that now there is but little chance of unprejudiced hearing for a man who brings a new test to its examination. Theologians and students of science, of course, with numerous exceptions among both classes, are not eminent among men for their desire thoroughly to understand the position of those who criticise them, or patiently to seek a ground of truth on which dissentient opinions may possibly meet. In this respect the Church is at least consistent; it has withstood a great deal in its time, and so need not be too much perturbed at new attacks; and the dogmatism of science, offensive though it be, is a very natural accompaniment of sudden and marvellous success. But if there is nothing miraculous in the faults of human nature, they are all the more to be regretted on that account, and very much more if the result in the case of the book before us should be that contempt is hurled upon so serious and painstaking an attempt to give expression to the sort of thought which lies between theological and scientific dogmatism as is found in Mr. Arnold's essay. It is to be remembered that it nowhere pretends to be an authoritative assertion of absolute truth; it is only an attempt to give utterance to a deep religious feeling, which finds itself repelled by what to many seem too hard formulæ for the hungry heart to receive. Of course the book is strongly flavored with the writer's personality; probably no other man will agree with it thoroughly, nor is it desirable that any one should; but it will be found to express in words a great deal which many had been unconsciously working out in their minds. And a book which does this in a temperate spirit is sure to make a